



BOSTON STREET RAILWAY ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Trackless Trolley Farewell Trip

Saturday, February 19, 2022

Inclement Weather Date: February 26, 2022

The Boston Elevated Railway Company began its first trackless trolley service on the busy line between Harvard Square and Lechmere Station in Cambridge, replacing streetcar operation on April 11, 1936. The trackless trolley was considered an economical way to provide speedy, reliable service while saving the high cost of maintaining track but using the overhead wire and power distribution system infrastructure which had many years of useful life remaining.

In 1938, the Huron Avenue line was converted to trackless trolleys, inaugurating the use of rubber-tired vehicles in the tunnel under Harvard Square. Trackless service on Huron was "temporarily" discontinued in 2013, to allow for road construction along the route. Revenue trackless trolley service never returned to the Huron line, but the overhead remained as an emergency pull-in, pull-out route, used most recently in the summer of 2021.

The Boston Elevated and later the MTA trackless trolley network expanded rapidly. By 1952, in terms of vehicles, the network was the third largest in the United States, exceeded only by the systems in Chicago and Atlanta. Between 1959 and 1963, most of the system was converted to bus operation. The only lines that remained were those installed in Cambridge, Belmont, and Watertown in 1958 to replace the streetcars in these municipalities.

Trackless trolleys were kept here because of concerns about fumes from buses in the surface vehicle tunnel under Harvard Square, and until buses with catalytic converter mufflers were introduced in the mid-1960s, trackless trolleys were the sole users of that tunnel. Notwithstanding the use of catalytic mufflers on diesels in the tunnel, the rise over time of environmental concerns about internal combustion exhaust gave trackless trolleys a new lease on life. The MBTA purchased an additional two generations of trolley coaches, which run to this day.

The MBTA has announced the replacement of the existing trackless trolleys with diesel-hybrid buses based at Charlestown Garage, and eventually battery-powered buses based at North Cambridge. The last day of service will be March 12, 2022.

Join us on February 19, 2022, for a trackless trolley farewell fantrip. We will be using a standard Neoplan trackless trolley, a Silver Line dual-mode vehicle and historic RTS bus 0309 on this trip. The dual mode, which normally uses trolley poles in the tunnel from South Station to Silver Line Way in South Boston, will operate on our trip in both electric and diesel modes and should provide some unique photographs. Bus 0309 will be a useful and interesting backup if and as needed.

The trip will leave from North Cambridge Carhouse at 9:00 A.M. SHARP and will cover all existing lines including Huron Avenue. Please arrive early so that we can have an orderly check-in and leave on time. The trip is estimated to end about 3:00 P.M., depending on weather and traffic.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Federal and state law require that ALL passengers on board public transportation vehicles (including those on our trip), and at indoor OR outdoor bus stops, platforms, and stations, must wear face coverings that cover the nose and mouth at all times. This is a mandatory requirement and WILL be enforced throughout the trip. **By purchasing a ticket, you agree to comply with this requirement.** Anyone who does not adhere to this law during our trip or disrupts it as a result will be subject to removal from the trip without a refund.

Please join us on February 19 (or February 26 in the event of severe inclement weather), for another of our trips which everyone has enjoyed. In this instance, the trip will be an historical event as well.

See you there!

Pay by credit card by placing your order online at www.thebsra.org/fantrip

- OR YOU MAY-

Pay by check or money order and send the coupon below and payment to:

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- **We will NOT distribute tickets. Instead we will check your name off our list as you arrive the day of the trip.** Please check here ☐ if you would like Email confirmation that we have received your order (please provide your email address below).
- In the event that inclement weather forces us to postpone to Feb. 26, we will post a notice on our website, email everyone for whom we were provided an address, and call those who only provided a phone number.

Please reserve for me ticket(s) at \$10.00 each for the Trackless Trolley Farewell Trip.
(Maximum of three per order.)

Total Enclosed \$

Name

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